

HOW TO... Use headers and footers in Word 2007

Word 2007 handles headers and footers in a very different way to previous versions of the program. Rod Lawton explains the differences and how to use the new tools

Headers and footers are useful for displaying titles, dates, page numbers and other information at the top and/or bottom of every page. Last month we showed you how to create headers and footers in Microsoft Word 2003, but pointed out that while the concepts are the same in Word 2007, the way the software goes about it is very different.

Two things are immediately obvious. First, the interface redesign means that nothing is where it used to be. Second, Word now has a range of ready-to-use header and footer 'building blocks' that you can add to your documents. These are designed to make jobs such as this easier. But how do you customise them and how do you create your own headers and footers from scratch? Many more experienced users prefer to work like this, simply because they like to know exactly what's going on. If you're used to creating headers and footers in Word 2003 and you've just upgraded to 2007, blank headers and footers are probably the best place to start.

Our walkthrough demonstrates how to use Word 2007's pre-designed building block headers and footers, how to customise them and add your own content, and how to set up separate left and right headers for two-sided printing and binding. We've focused on using headers, but footers use exactly the same commands, only you need to use the Footer button, rather than the Header button, to control them.

1 To work on headers and footers in Word 2003, you use the View, Header and Footer menu option. This has changed completely in Word 2007. Now, you need to select the Insert Ribbon and then look for the Header & Footer group.

When you click on the Header button, Word displays a list of pre-designed header building blocks. You can pick one of these or select a Blank header and enter your own content. You're presented with a text box to type in but, once you exit the box, the header text behaves like regular text. You can place text on the left, in the centre or on the right by using tab stops – Step 5 shows these in action. In this instance, though, we're going for Word's preformatted Mod (Even Page) header, so select this from the Header building blocks menu. There's more on odd and even pages later.

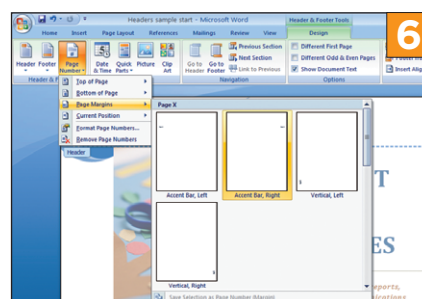
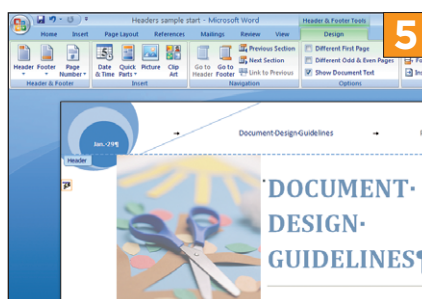
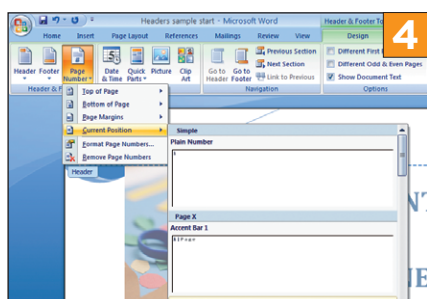
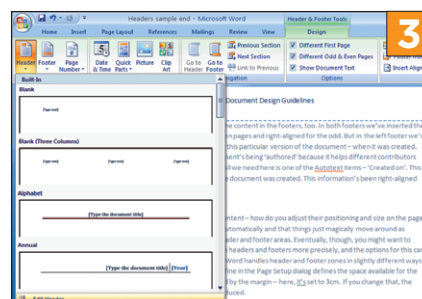
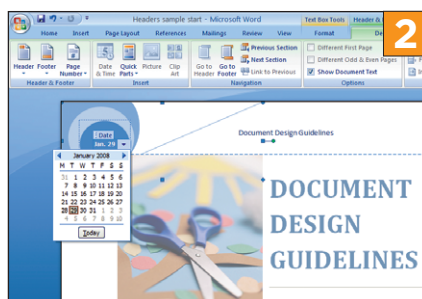
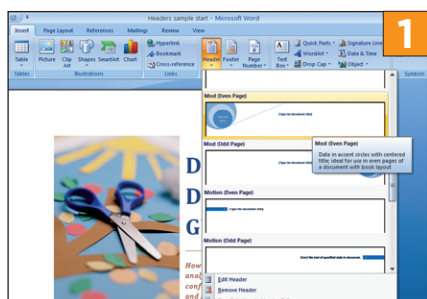
2 This header design has a circular graphic element on the left that contains a date field (the date is entered automatically) and, in the centre, the document title. You can type in whatever title you want here, but be aware that this is not a regular piece of text but a 'Quick Part' – in Word 2003, this would be 'Autotext'. This has particular significance when we come to add a page number in Step 4.

The date on the left of the header is also semi-automated content. By default, it inserts

the current date, but you can click the arrow on the right to display a pop-up calendar that enables you to navigate to a date of your choice.

3 You may find that the selection of pre-formatted headers and footers is all you need and that you now want to go back to working on the document itself. To do this, click the Close Header & Footer box at the far right of the Ribbon. But what if you want to modify the header later? Word 2007 doesn't have Word 2003's View, Header and Footer command. This is where Word 2007 is a little counter-intuitive. To edit an existing header, you have to click the Insert tab and the Header button again, even though you don't want to insert anything. Don't pick one of the header designs because it will replace the one you've already got. Instead, go right to the bottom of the menu and choose Edit Header. You can also double-click a header to edit it and then double-click back in the main document text to leave it.

4 Many of the pre-designed headers in Word 2007 use Quick Parts. These aren't handled like ordinary text because they are, in effect, data fields. So, if you want to add a page number to the header, you can't just place the insertion point after the title and use the Page Number menu in the Header & Footer group. If you do, it will simply replace the title field.



Instead, select the field and then tap the right arrow key so that the field is deselected and the insertion point appears immediately after it. To create a gap between the title and the page number, hit the tab key – tabs have special significance in headers (see the next step). Now you can click the Page Number button in the Header & Footer group to display its drop-down menu.

Be careful here. If you choose the Top of Page or Bottom of Page options, your header or footer will be replaced. Instead, choose the Current Position option and choose a style from the list. We've chosen Accent Bar 2.

5 In Word 2007, some header designs use tables to organise the layout of the different elements. Others use tab stops (created by pressing Tab), which is how Word 2003 handles alignment, too. Here, we've switched on the invisible character display (click the Word Start button, select Word Options and click Display) to show how it works. One tab stop is used to centre text, while another tab stop right-aligns it. Here, we've used a tab stop before the title, which is now displayed in the centre, and another before the page number, which pushes it to the right. It's not exactly elegant because it doesn't reflect the way tab stops work in the document itself, but it is simple and effective.

6 Page numbers don't have to be inserted in the header area, although there are header designs that include page numbers. Word 2007 has a neat option that puts them in the side margins instead. Click the Page Number button and select the Page Margins option. Now choose the page numbering style you want from the list. The page numbers will appear outside the header area and in the empty right-hand or left-hand margin, depending on which style you choose.

Alternatively, you can choose a footer design that incorporates a page number. Indeed, there's a corresponding 'Mod (Even Pages)' footer design to match the header we've already inserted. These header and footer building blocks in Word 2007 look smart and they can certainly save some time, but it's a pity there aren't more of them.

7 To format page numbers, select the number and click Page Number in the Header and Footer group. Don't insert one of the number styles because this will replace the number already in place. Instead, choose Format Page Numbers further down the list. This opens a dialog box where you can change from Arabic to Roman numerals, choose a different starting number and, if you break up larger documents into sections, choose whether the numbering continues from the previous section.

8 Word offers Odd and Even headers and footers for a reason. By default, documents aren't sided. In other words, each page is the same. But if you're using a duplex printer or getting publications printed commercially, they'll be printed on both sides and, when the document is opened, users will see left and right pages facing each other. These will look odd if their design isn't mirrored around the spine in the centre. First, you need to check the Different Odd & Even Pages box in the Options group. Now, the odd and even pages in the document will have different headers and footers. This means that on half the pages they'll be blank, so you have to add headers and footers all over again for these facing pages.

This is why there are odd and even variants of the pre-set headers and footers in the menus, so it takes only a few moments to sort this out. Add an Odd header to the next blank page. Word labels the headers as Odd and Even, which you'll notice are the opposite to the header types you've used. We'll sort this out shortly.

9 The date field in the Mod (Odd Pages) header doesn't have the same format as the date in the even version we've already used – it simply displays the year instead of the month and date. To adjust the format, first make sure the field is properly selected by clicking the Date label directly above it. Now click the Page Number button in the Header & Footer group and choose Format Page Numbers near the bottom of the list. This displays the Date and Time dialog. Choose English (UK) from the Language pop-up, top right, then choose a suitable date format from the list on the left.

10 There's one more thing to attend to: even headers and footers placed on odd pages and vice versa. The reason for this is that the first page in our document has a header that contains the title. We don't really want this because the title is on the first page anyway.

What we need to do, then, is check the Different First Page box in the Options group. The header on our first page disappears, and we can either leave this blank (which most people do for title pages) or create some custom content just for this particular header. Incidentally, if you insert a pre-designed cover page at the front of your document, the Different First Page option will be selected automatically.

A different first page has the knock-on effect that the correct headers should appear on the odd and even pages.

11 Now have a quick scroll through the document to check that the headers and footers are laid out properly. First, make sure that all the page numbers on the odd pages are odd and all the even pages have even numbers. Word's odd and even labels should make this clear.

Then make sure that the page numbers are always on the outside of the page. With even pages they should be on the left-hand side and with odd pages they should be on the right.

12 If you go to the trouble of creating your own custom headers (or footers), you may want to save them for re-use later on. This will certainly be true if you're designing company stationery, for example, or a regularly published newsletter or bulletin.

To do this, select all the contents of the header – use the Ctrl-A shortcut to be sure you've picked up everything in the header, and click outside any text fields before you do so. Once all the header contents are selected, click the Header button in the Options group, go right to the bottom of the list and choose Save Selection to Header Gallery.

Your custom header will now appear at the bottom of the list when you insert a header in any new documents. 

